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11 January 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: The Soviet Foreign Propaganda Apparatus

1. There isn't much here that I didn't know but I think it is a useful piece of work which should be finished and published. I would like to see it supplemented by an effort to analyze the thrust and content of Soviet propaganda which, as the Scope Note states, is not addressed here.

2. The Scope Note also says that a discussion of Soviet active measures is to be the topic of a separate research paper. Where does that stand? What will it take to do a study of the thrust and content of Soviet propaganda? I have a note on the first paragraph on page iii. The first paragraph of the Summary says that Soviet propaganda evokes in foreign audiences a positive sentiment toward the Soviet Union. That seems to overlook the companion purpose of denigrating Western values and purposes.

3. Much of this material could and should be made broadly available. I would be inclined to publish this piece as it is but I would like your opinion on how much would be lost in sanitizing it.


William J. Casey

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The Soviet Foreign Propaganda Apparatus

A Research Paper

Information available as of 9 December 1985 was used
in the preparation of this paper.



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SCOPE NOTE

This paper describes the instruments and techniques of Soviet foreign propaganda and analyzes the bureaucratic apparatus that formulates its themes and strategies. It assesses trends in the management and tactics of Soviet external propaganda, but does not analyze its content. The paper is primarily concerned with the Soviet message openly conveyed abroad, or "white" propaganda. The role of clandestine radiobroadcasting, KGB activities, and front organizations are discussed, however, in the context of the overall foreign propaganda effort. A detailed discussion of Soviet active measures--covertly orchestrated activities that may include but go beyond propaganda--will be the topic of a separate research paper.

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Much of the information used in this paper--particularly that on the process of formulating propaganda campaigns--comes from working-level positions in the Soviet media and KGB and consequently have good knowledge of the instruments of the foreign propaganda effort. Their experience, however, with Central Committee propaganda organs has been less direct and thus their reporting

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on these organs is more speculative. Open-source Soviet publications were valuable in providing information on the reach and scope of the Soviet propaganda organs. The United States Information Agency (USIA), provided information on Soviet cultural and informational activities, as well as television and radiobroadcasting.

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Summary

The Soviet Union devotes major resources to convey Soviet views and disseminate anti-Western propaganda to an increasingly large and diverse audience. Moscow's primary instruments for attacking Western initiatives and promoting Soviet policies on a day-to-day basis are its news agencies and radio broadcasting, as well as reporting in the foreign media. Many other activities that serve a propaganda function--cultural activities, scholarships, and high-level visits, for example--are used in an effort to evoke in foreign audiences a positive sentiment toward the Soviet Union.

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What about denigration & distortion of western values & purposes

TASS, the Soviet Union's official news agency, has offices in 126 countries. Its effectiveness has been hampered by the Soviet failure to tailor its articles for specific foreign countries, but we have reporting that indicates that TASS is attempting to make its copy "more readable" for its audiences by including more human interest stories.

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The USSR's "unofficial" news agency, APN (Novosti), distributes information to at least 5,000 press and information organs in 110 countries. In contrast to TASS, APN places emphasis on preparing propaganda tailored for individual countries, particularly developing countries. This effort includes using foreign nationals, introducing a new teletype service, and relying more on photographic materials. APN also

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conducts a grant program that brings substantial numbers of foreign journalists and public officials to the USSR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the program is designed to get recipients to speak and write favorably about their trip and the Soviet Union upon their return. In 1983, the program had 2,000 recipients from around the world. [REDACTED]

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Both TASS and APN make available a number of overseas positions to the Soviet intelligence services. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that at least one-third of TASS personnel are staff employees of the KGB or GRU, and some reporting indicates that the number is even higher for APN. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets have the capacity to reach virtually every corner of the globe with their radiobroadcasts. For the past 20 years the Soviets have gradually been increasing their radiobroadcasts, and by the end of 1984 they were broadcasting for 2,167 hours per week in over 80 languages. In addition to their overt broadcasts, the Soviets run two "unofficial" stations, which purport not to be run by the Soviet government, and at least four clandestine radio stations that support pro-Soviet views. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets have a number of outlets for their television broadcasts but, for the near term, Soviet television is unlikely to have a major propaganda impact. All direct broadcasts are aimed primarily at the domestic audience and are conducted in

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Russian. They can be picked up outside the USSR, but not without special, expensive, receiving equipment. The Soviets do, however, place television programs abroad through official agreements and by various Soviet representatives abroad providing television materials, usually at low or no cost, to commercial outlets. [REDACTED]

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The Soviet Union carries out an extensive cultural exchange program worldwide. According to one Soviet official, as of this year the USSR has intergovernmental agreements or formal programs with 120 countries. For the Soviets, "cultural relations" is a broad term that includes such activities as science, education, literature, music, sports, and tourism. The breadth and diversity of their cultural activities enable the Soviets to appeal to a wide variety of foreign audiences. The Soviets also provide numerous foreign scholarships, particularly to students from the developing countries. In December 1984 over 57,000 students from less developed countries were studying in the USSR. [REDACTED]

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International Communist front organizations, although only covertly associated with the Soviet Union, are an integral part of the foreign propaganda effort because they strive to rally world opinion around Soviet causes. Among their numerous activities, many of which get wide media coverage, are meetings,

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rallies, conferences, and demonstrations. Additionally, each of the thirteen major front organizations issues a regular publication as well as ad hoc writings which tout the Soviet line. [REDACTED]

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The propaganda management apparatus is a large, highly centralized organization. Propaganda policy is decided by basically the same authorities that approve Soviet foreign policy--the Politburo, with inputs from the CPSU International Department and other party and government bodies. The coordination of the propaganda effort with the Soviet media organs is largely the job of the CPSU International Information Department (IID), headed by Leonid Zamyatin. This centralization of propaganda policy-making in basically the same organizations that create Soviet foreign policy ensures that propaganda supports policy and that propaganda can be flexible and changed when policy may demand it. [REDACTED]

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We have no objective means for measuring the overall effectiveness of Soviet propaganda in influencing public thinking and policies abroad, but the huge investment the Soviet Union has made in its propaganda effort--in radio broadcasting, news agencies, publications, and cultural and information activities--attests to Moscow's high regard for propaganda instruments as political tools. [REDACTED]

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In spite of this massive effort, Soviet leaders have continually voiced concern about the quality and timeliness of their foreign propaganda. Gorbachev is taking a more activist role in the foreign propaganda area and has ordered changes that, if implemented, will certainly increase the size of the effort, and are also designed to improve its credibility, sophistication, and timeliness. [REDACTED]

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The lack of credibility of their news and information is the most serious problem for the Soviets. One of the ways that they combat it is through repetition: they present their propaganda on a particular theme through a number of outlets, both overt and covert, hoping that each will add to the credibility of the other to produce a convincing story. They also use the foreign media as a vehicle for their propaganda, hoping that, by doing so, their ideas will gain the Western media's credibility. Soviet commentators, particularly since Gorbachev became General Secretary, have been appearing regularly on the foreign media to present the Soviet version of issues and events. [REDACTED]

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Timeliness is also a problem that, on major issues, will not be resolved easily by the Soviets. Various incidents have shown that the propaganda effort breaks down quickly when instructions from the top are not forthcoming or when bureaucratic equities are conflicting. Close party controls and inflexible bureaucratic procedures also contribute to inertia and delays--delays that, as Soviet leaders have acknowledged, mean that their

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interpretation of events will not be the first one heard by foreign audiences, thus reducing its impact. The presence of a strong leader may reduce some of those delays. Additionally, there have been rumors that Gorbachev plans to reorganize the propaganda apparatus--apparently attempting to streamline the process--most of which center around the IID being merged with other Central Committee Departments. Even a reorganization of the apparatus, though, unlikely to resolve the conflicting bureaucratic interests that have caused problems in the past on issues of major importance. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets are currently undertaking a "massive new effort" to educate people around the world about Soviet proposals and policies because they feel that their ideas are not being heard, according to [REDACTED] Other evidence also suggests that they will be increasing their propaganda effort in the future. According to [REDACTED] the following propaganda developments are likely:

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--Soviet radio and television will be emphasized more in future propaganda endeavors.

--The Soviets will introduce additional clandestine radio stations targeted at Western Europe in the near future.

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--The Soviets will improve the supply of their publications-- books in particular. Most of this increase will probably go to developing countries.

--The Soviets will double the equipment budget of propaganda agencies for the purchase of more sophisticated computers, radio, television, and other audiovisual equipment.

--The Soviets will attempt to differentiate their propaganda for individual countries more in the future.

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In addition, we believe that TASS and APN will almost certainly continue to increase the number of subscribers to their services, offering them at low or no cost, and that Soviet commentators will increase their use of the foreign media as a propaganda outlet.

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